

WHAT IS CLAIMED IS:

1. ~~A glide head comprising:
an aerodynamic means for riding above the
surface of a spinning disc; and
a thermal detection means for detecting
thermal spikes resulting from contact
with an asperity.~~
2. ~~A glide head comprising:
an air bearing surface; and
a first thermal transducer that is generally
planar, the thermal transducer being
oriented along the air-bearing surface.~~
3. ~~The glide head of claim 2 wherein the air
bearing surface has contours.~~
4. ~~The glide head of claim 3 wherein the contours
include rails oriented along the length of the glide
head.~~
5. ~~The glide head of claim 3 wherein the thermal
transducers are located on the contours.~~
6. ~~The glide head of claim 2 wherein the thermal
transducers are in electrical contact with electrically
conductive pads extending to the top surface of the
glide head.~~
7. ~~The glide head of claim 6 wherein conductive
strips provide electrical contact between the thermal
transducer and the pads.~~
8. ~~The glide head of claim 6 wherein the thermal
transducer is in physical contact with the pads.~~
9. ~~The glide head of claim 2 wherein the thermal
transducer extends at least half of the distance between
the front edge of the glide head to the rear edge of the
glide head.~~

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10. The glide head of claim 2 wherein the thermal transducer extends substantially from the front edge of the slider to the rear edge of the glide head.

11. The glide head of claim 2 further comprising a second thermal transducer.

12. The glide head of claim 11 wherein the first thermal transducer and the second thermal transducer share a common electrical ground.

13. The glide head of claim 11 wherein the first thermal transducer and the second thermal transducer are oriented along a contoured surface and the glide head further comprises electrically conductive strips in electrical contact with the thermal transducers, the strips being located on a plateau on the air bearing surface at a different level from the contour.

14. The glide head of claim 2 further comprising a piezoelectric transducer.

15. An asperity detection system comprising a glide head of claim 2.

16. A method of producing a glide head, the method comprising depositing a thermal transducer along an air bearing surface of the glide head.

17. The method of claim 16 wherein the deposition of the thermal transducer is performed onto the surface of a wafer prior to slicing a plurality of glide heads from the wafer.

18. The method of claim 16 wherein the deposition of the thermal transducer is performed onto the air bearing surface after the glide head is sliced from a wafer.

19. The method of claim 16 wherein the air bearing surface is contoured prior to the deposition of the thermal transducer.

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The method of claim 16 wherein the deposition is performed using a thin film deposition technique.

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